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## **MR. MISUNDERSTOOD REMAINS PERFECT ON GRASS WITH GRADE III COMMONWEALTH TURF TRIUMPH**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Nov. 11, 2017)** – Staton Flurry’s **Mr. Misunderstood** remained perfect in seven starts on turf when he made a sweeping move at the top of the stretch to easily cruise by the leaders and beat **Parlor** by 1 ½ lengths in Saturday’s 14<sup>th</sup> running of the \$100,000 Commonwealth Turf (Grade III) at Churchill Downs.

Sent to post as the odds-on 3-5 favorite in the field of eight 3-year-olds, Mr. Misunderstood – named after the **Eric Church** hit song – covered 1 1/16 miles over firm turf in 1:46.80. **Florent Geroux**, who won last weekend’s Breeders’ Cup Classic aboard likely Horse of the Year **Gun Runner**, rode the winner for Louisville-native trainer **Brad Cox**.

The Commonwealth Turf was Mr. Misunderstood’s first graded stakes triumph but fourth straight win against stakes company. Previously, he won the \$60,000 Prelude and \$200,000 Super Derby at Louisiana Downs before winning the \$100,000 Jefferson Cup (Listed) at Churchill Downs in September.

“It’s unbelievable to get our first graded stakes win,” said Flurry, a 27-year-old native of Hot Springs, Ark. “Last year we ran this horse for (a) \$30,000 (claiming tag) at Fair Grounds and to now turn the corner and become a graded stakes winner is really something special.”

Mr. Misunderstood joined **Inca King** (2007) and **Heart to Heart** (2014) as the only 3-year-olds to sweep Churchill Downs’ Jefferson Cup and Commonwealth Turf in the same year.

**Mr Cub** set a dawdling early pace of :25.65, :50.89 and 1:16.35 as Mr. Misunderstood raced near the rear. In fact, he was last when the field exited the far turn. Geroux dropped his hands and asked Mr. Misunderstood for his best run. The tandem had clear sailing from the outside and engulfed the leaders within an eighth of a mile.

“This horse has an incredible turn of foot,” Geroux said. “Once I asked him to go at the top of the stretch he just took off. He handed the surface perfectly today. It’s easy riding when you have a horse with that kind of speed.”

Parlor made a belated late run to get second and was 1 ¼ lengths ahead of Mr Cub who held third. It was another neck back to **Gorgeous Kitten**, who was followed in order by **Giant Payday**, **My Bariley**, **Tiz a Slam** and **Sharm El Sheikh**.

The victory was worth \$60,140 and increased Mr. Misunderstood’s earnings to \$364,694 with a record of 7-1-0 in 11 starts.

“He’s impressed us so much this year,” said Cox, who won the 2015 Commonwealth Turf with **Almasty** (another former \$30,000 claimer). “He’s had a great campaign throughout the year and has really excelled on the turf. I’m so excited for Staton to get his first graded stakes victory. I know he’s wanted it for a long time and I’m happy to be a part of it.”

Mr. Misunderstood returned \$3.40, \$2.60 and \$2.10. Parlor paid \$3.40 and \$2.80. Mr Cub paid \$3.80 to show.

Mr. Misunderstood, a son of Archarcharch out of the Afternoon Deelites mare Jodys Deelite, was bred in Kentucky by **Athens Woods**.

Racing at Churchill Downs resumes Sunday with a 10-race program that begins at 1 p.m. ET.

## COMMONWEALTH TURF QUOTES

**FLORENT GEROUX, jockey of MR. MISUNDERSTOOD (winner):** “This horse has an incredible turn of foot. Once I asked him to go at the top of the stretch he just took off. He handed the surface perfectly today. It’s easy riding when you have a horse with that kind of speed.”

**BRAD COX, trainer of MR. MISUNDERSTOOD (winner):** “He’s impressed us so much this year. He’s had a great campaign throughout the year and has really excelled on the turf. I’m so excited for Staton to get his first graded stakes victory. I know he’s wanted it for a long time and I’m happy to be a part of it.”

**STATON FLURRY, owner of MR. MISUNDERSTOOD (winner):** “It’s unbelievable to get our first graded stakes win. Last year we ran this horse for (a) \$30,000 (claiming tag) at Fair Grounds and to now turn the corner and become a graded stakes winner is really something special.”

**EDDIE KENNEALLY, trainer of PARLOR (runner-up):** “The horse ran well, but he was just second-best. The winner’s a nice horse. But it was certainly a good effort. He’s been running hard all year and he ran good again today.”

**JULIEN LEPAROUX, jockey on PARLOR (runner-up):** “The winner is a nice horse. We had a pretty good trip, but I wish we weren’t down on the inside where Florent (Geroux on Mr. Misunderstood) kind of kept us in there a little bit longer than I’d hoped. But even saying that, I don’t know if we could beat the winner. My horse ran a good race and we’re happy with it.”

**IAN WILKES, trainer of MR CUB (third):** “We’re very, very happy. The horse ran a really good race. We just got outrun. The winner is a very, very nice horse. We set the pace we wanted to beat him and he was back there in between horses, but that horse kicked. I thought our horse fought hard to be third and that was good.”

**JOE ROCCO JR., jockey on MR CUB (third):** “My horse ran very well. They let us go really easy up front and I was hoping we’d be able to sprint home and kind of steal it. But that horse of Brad’s is just too good. Mr. Misunderstood – we understand him very well, or at least Brad does, for sure. My horse really dug-in and tried. I think he’s come a long way since I first started riding him and I’m proud of him. I think he’s steadily going to get better.”

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